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PH 501 Philosophy of Christian Religion

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PH 501
PHILOSOPHY OF CHRISTIAN RELIGION
SPRING 2003
Jerry L. Walls

I. OBJECTIVE

Students who complete this course will

- A. gain initiation into the great intellectual tradition of seeking wisdom that is called philosophy;
- B. gain some competence and confidence in analyzing and criticizing philosophical arguments;
- C. come to appreciate more fully how Christian theism is both a rich source of philosophical reflection and a powerful resource for making sense of our deepest questions. In particular, our discussion will revolve around Eight Great Questions
 - 1. What is the nature of freedom and responsibility?
 - 2. How are mind and body related?
 - 3. What makes religious language meaningful?
 - 4. Are there good extra-biblical reasons to believe God exists?
 - 5. If God is all good and all powerful, why is there so much evil?
 - 6. Are faith and reason compatible?
 - 7. Is it rational to believe in miracles in the modern/postmodern world?
 - 8. Can life after death be defended philosophically?

II. REQUIREMENTS

- A. Most of the class time will be given to lectures; the remaining part will be spent in discussion. It is required that students will read all assignments to facilitate understanding of lectures and participation in discussions. A reading report will be due at the end of the term. If less than 100% of the reading is done, it will affect your grade adversely.
- B. Five essays will be assigned over the term. Each will be 4-5 pages (**MAXIMUM**), typed, double spaced, number pages, and stapled with a cover sheet. **(NO paper clips and NO folders or covers. Name, date and SPO # in upper right hand corner)** Aim for clarity and organization in your argument. Interact with readings, but avoid plagiarism like the plague! Give attention to spelling and grammar.
- C. Class attendance is required. You are expected to take your own notes. An attendance report will be due at the end of the term. Two absences are permitted. If you are absent more than two times, it will affect your grade unless all are excused.

III. TEXTS

- A. William Hasker, Metaphysics.
- B. Michael Peterson et al., Reason and Religious Belief: An Introduction to the Philosophy of Religion, 3rd edition.
- C. Michael Peterson et. al., Philosophy of Religion: Selected Readings, 2nd Edition (*Readings*)

IV. DAILY ASSIGNMENTS

| | | |
|--------------------|-----------------------------|----------------------------------|
| February 11 | Introduction | |
| 13 | Hasker | 13-28; 119-123; 29-44 |
| 18 | Hasker | 45-65 |
| 20 | Hasker Peterson | 65-80 220-245 |
| 25 | Peterson <i>Readings</i> | 1-14 371-378 |
| 27 | <i>Readings</i> Peterson | 165-179 77-106 |
| March 4 | <i>Readings</i> | 187-208; 218-230; 241-246 |
| 6 | Peterson | 15-38 |
| 11 | <i>Readings</i> | 7-10; 20-29 |
| 13 | Peterson | 128-153 |
| 18 | <i>Readings</i> | 251-262; 274-287 |
| 20 | <i>Readings</i> | 287-300 |
| 25 | <i>Readings</i> | 301-326 |
| 27 | Peterson | 39-57 |
| April 1 | <i>Readings</i> | 77-94 |
| 3 | Peterson | 107-127 |
| 7 – 11 | READING WEEK | |
| 15 | <i>Readings</i> | 329-355 |
| 17 | <i>Readings</i> | 355-365 |
| 22 | Peterson <i>Readings</i> | 173-193 417-426 |
| 24 | <i>Readings</i> | 427-444 |
| 29 | Peterson | 194-219 |
| May 1 | <i>Readings</i> | 447-468 |
| 6 | <i>Readings</i> | 469-488 |
| 8 | Peterson | 246-266 |
| 13 | Peterson | 267-288 |
| 15 | | |